Proposal from medical college of Allahabad University

†1226. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal has been received from the Medical College under Allahabad University with regard to providing more facilities in the Department of Pathology of the college to make it of higher level;

(b) if so, the decision taken by Government with a view to medical exigency; and

(c) whether any order has been passed and the current status of the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The proposal can be considered only after the proposed scheme under Eleventh Five Year Plan for funding upgradation & strengthening of State Government Medical/Dental colleges is finalized.

Alzheimer patients in the country

†1227. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated number of patients effected by Alzheimer disease in the country;

(b) whether the highly educated people are effected by this disease in particular;

(c) whether Government has taken any measures to prevent this disease;

(d) whether there is any arrangement for diagnosis and treatment of this disease in the country; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) Based on the World Health Report, the prevalence of Alzheimer's disease is 5% in males and 6% in females, above the age of 60 years.

(b) There are no data available to show that the higher educated people are affected more by this disease.

(c) to (e) Diagnosis and treatment for Alzheimer's disease is provided in all the major hospitals of the country both in the Government and private sector. In addition, basic care for behavioural and psychological management of the disease is also provided through District Mental Health Programme under National Mental Health Programme which is proposed to be extended to all the Districts of the country in a phased manner during the Eleventh Five Year Plan.

Usage of hazardous pesticides in vegetables and adulterations in food

1228. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are reports of extensive usage of hazardous pesticides in vegetables and adulterations in food articles;

(b) the number of persons booked for such offences;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether Government is considering to amend the relevant Acts/Rules for imposing severe punishment to the culprits; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the Centre's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. ANBUMANI RAMADOSS): (a) and (b) No such specific report has been brought to the notice of this Ministry. However, a Monitoring Study of Pesticide residues and heavy metals in vegetables available in Delhi market has been carried out by the All India Network Project on Pesticide Residues, Indian Agriculture Research Institute, New Delhi.

A total of 54 samples of various vegetables (bhindi, palak, tomato, parwal, bringal, cabbage) were collected from Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC), Azadpur, New Delhi and analysed for the possible residue of pesticides and heavy metals, during the period of June 2006 to April 2007. Out of the 54 samples, only in two samples of palak and one sample each of cabbage and brinjal, residues of pesticide, namely cholrpyrifos were detected which were below the prescribed Maximum Residue Limit (0.2 ppm) under PFA Rules, 1955. However, in rest of the 50 samples, no pesticide residues were detected.

As far as adulteration in food articles is concerned it is stated that the implementation of the PFA Act, 1954 and Rules, 1955 is entrusted to the Food (Health) Authorities of the States/U.Ts. The enforcement staff of the Food (Health) Authorities draw samples of different food articles from all sources *viz.* Manufacturers, Wholesalers and Retailers and get them analysed so as to see whether the samples conform to the standards laid down under PFA Rules, 1955 and other provisions of the PFA Act.

As per the information made available so far by Food (Health) Authorities for the Annual Reports on the working of the PFA Act and Rules in their respective State/U.T., the percentage of adulteration in different food articles has declined from 11.71% in the year 2002 to 9.57% in the year 2005.

During the year 2004 and 2005, a total of 5023 and 9169 cases have been launched in different Courts of Law respectively, against the offenders for violating different provisions of the PFA Act, 1954 & Rules framed thereunder.

(c) and (d) The provisions for punishment under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 stipulates imprisonment terms from six months up to life depending upon the gravity of offence. The Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 would get repealed on coming into force of the Food Safety & Standards Act, 2006, under which different penalties are envisaged for sub-standard, misbranded and adulterated foods which varies from Rs. 25000/- to Rs. 5,00,000/-.

There are specific penalties for food which are unsafe and varies depending upon the gravity of offences, from an imprisonment for a term which may extend to six month with fine which may extend to Rs. One lakh to a term for six years and fine which may extend to Rs. 5 lakhs. Where to contravention results in death, the punishment may extend to imprisonment for a term which is not less than 7 years but which may extend to imprisonment for life and also with a fine which shall not be less then Rs. 10 lakhs.

Flouride and arsenic poisoning

1229. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that about 66 million people across 17 States are estimated to be at risk of fluoride poisoning and 13.8 million people in 75 blocks are at the risk of arsenic poisoning;